

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after a decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but before the filing of a Notice of Appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit or the commencement of a civil action. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 10 June 2009 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

2. The Applicants' amendment, filed 10 June 2009, has been received, entered into the record, and considered.

3. As a result of the amendment, claims 1, 11, 14 and 21 have been amended, and claim 10 has been canceled. Claim 16 had been previously canceled. Claims 1-9, 11-15 and 17-21 are now pending in the application.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

4. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Attorney Dicran Halajian on 4 August 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1-10 (Canceled)

11.(Currently Amended) A method of browsing a collection of information units, comprising a step of presenting an information unit from said collection and a step of associating a respective information unit with an attribute value for at least one attribute, wherein the method comprises a step of automatically randomly selecting and presenting, without interaction by a user, audio or video media content of a unit from said collection of information units whose attribute values meet a criterion for said at least a first attribute, the ~~method~~ further comprising a step of displaying a simulation of

Deleted: system

a slot machine having at least one column comprising a plurality of randomly selectable attribute values, wherein each of the at least one column corresponds to an attribute, and a step of activating the random selection of an attribute value in at least one of the at least one column, an operation of said simulated slot machine representing said random selection, and each cylinder of said slot machine representing a set of valid attribute values for an attribute.

12.(Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 11, further comprising a step of user operably holding an attribute value of a currently selected unit as a criterion for subsequent selections.

Claims 13-21 (Cancelled)

22.(New) A system for browsing a collection of information units, comprising a processor configured to perform the following operations:

presenting an information unit from said collection;

associating a respective information unit with an attribute value for at least one attribute;

automatically randomly selecting and presenting, without interaction by a user, audio or video media content of a unit from said collection of information units whose attribute values meet a criterion for said at least a first attribute;

displaying a simulation of a slot machine having at least one column comprising a plurality of randomly selectable attribute values, wherein each of the at least one column corresponds to an attribute; and

activating the random selection of an attribute value in at least one of the at least one column, an operation of said simulated slot machine representing said random selection, and each cylinder of said slot machine representing a set of valid attribute values for an attribute.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 11, 12 and 22 are allowed.

6. The following is a statement of reasons for allowance:

The present invention is directed to a system and method for browsing a collection of information units, wherein information units are randomly presented to

the user, based on whether or not they meet user-defined attribute criteria. One embodiment of the invention is a system for distributing music or video files over the Internet, and wherein a randomization function is provided through a slot-machine-like graphical user interface.

The closest prior art of record, **Cluts** (U.S. Patent 5,616,876) teaches an interactive network that provides music to subscribers, and includes a "more like" function that allows subscribers to use a seed song to identify other songs that are similar to the seed song and add the new songs to the playlist.

However, **Cluts** fails to anticipate or render obvious the recited feature of displaying a simulation of a slot machine having at least one column comprising a plurality of randomly selectable attribute values, wherein each of the at least one column corresponds to an attribute, and activation means for activating the random selection of an attribute value in at least one of the at least one column, the operation of said simulated slot machine representing said random selection, as in independent claims 11 and 22.

These features, together with the other limitations of the independent claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. The dependent claim 12, being definite, enabled by the specification, and further limiting to its respective independent claim, is also allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Luke S. Wassum whose telephone number is 571-272-4119. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30-5:30, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John R. Cottingham can be reached on 571-272-7079. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

In addition, INFORMAL or DRAFT communications may be faxed directly to the examiner at 571-273-4119, or sent via email at luke.wassum@uspto.gov, **with a previous written authorization in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 502.03.** Such communications must be clearly marked as INFORMAL, DRAFT or UNOFFICIAL.

Customer Service for Tech Center 2100 can be reached during regular business hours at (571) 272-2100, or fax (571) 273-2100.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Luke S. Wassum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

/Luke S. Wassum/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2167

lsw
5 August 2009